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justly and safely be avoided, have great reason to fear that they shall be accountable before the supreme Judge for all the rapine and devastation, all the ruin and damage, as well as the blood, that is the consequence of that war. We may piously believe, that all the princes of the world who have wantonly obliged their subjects to serve them in a war by which millions of men have been exposed to slaughter, fire and famine, will sooner find remission for all the other sins they have committed, than for that obstinate outrage against the life of man, and the murders which have been committed by their authority." *

THE WICKEDNESS OF WAR.†

BY REV. HOWARD MALCOM, PRESIDENT OF GEORGETOWN COLLEGE, KENTUCKY.

The war spirit is so wrought into the texture of governments, and the habits of national thinking, and even into our very festivals and pomps, that its occasional recurrence is deemed a matter of unavoidable necessity. Even the friends of man's highest welfare seem to regard a general pacification of the world as a mere Utopian scheme, and choose to lend their energies and prayers to objects which seem of more probable attainment. This apathy and incredulity are to be overcome only by free discussion and forcible appeals.

It is not our intention to enter upon the question, on which good men may differ in opinion, whether defensive war may in any case be justified, nor upon a regular discussion of the general subject; but merely to offer a few thoughts to show how utterly at variance the *spirit* of war is with truth and righteousness.

1. *It contradicts the genius and intention of Christianity.*

Christianity requires us to seek to amend the condition of man. But war cannot do this. The world is no better for all the wars of five thousand years. Christianity, if it prevailed, would make the earth a paradise. War, where it prevails, makes it a slaughter-house, a den of thieves, a brothel, a hell. Christianity cancels the laws of retalia-

* Clarendon's Essays, XX, XXI, pp. 236—253.

† This article, though written for our Society, was published several years ago in that able and excellent quarterly, the Christian Review. We immediately prepared a notice of it, and marked nearly the whole for insertion in our pages; but, being excluded then by excess of other matter, and subsequently published in a number of our religious papers, we have delayed copying it, in the hope of being able long ere this to stereotype it as one of our tracts. Will not some friend give us twenty or thirty dollars for this purpose?—Ed.

tion. War is based upon that very principle. Christianity is the remedy for all human woes. War produces every wo known to man.

The causes of war, as well as war itself, are contrary to the gospel. It originates in the worst passions and the worst aims. We may always trace it to the thirst of revenge, the acquisition of territory, the monopoly of commerce, the quarrels of kings, the intrigues of ministers, the coercion of religious opinion, the acquisition of disputed crowns or some other source, equally culpable; but never has any war, devised by man, been founded on holy tempers and Christian principles.

All the features,—all the concomitants,—all the results of war, are the opposite of the features, the concomitants, the results of Christianity. The two systems conflict in every point, irreconcilably and eternally. To be more specific, it may be remarked, that

2. *War sets at nought the examples of Jesus.*

One of Christ's primary laws is, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." His conduct was always pacific. He became invisible, when the Nazarites sought to cast him down from their precipice. When a troop came to arrest him, he struck them down, but not dead. His constant declaration was, that he "came not to destroy men's lives, but to save."

True, he once instructed his disciples to buy swords, telling them that they were going forth into a world of enemies. But the whole passage shows he meant to speak by parable. They answer, "Here are two swords." He replies instantly, "*It is enough.*" How could two swords have been enough for the twelve apostles, if he had spoken literally? Nay, when Peter used one of these, it was too much; Christ bade him, "Put up thy sword," and healed the wound. He meant to show the apostles their danger, not their remedy; for they were going as "sheep among wolves." His metaphor was indeed misunderstood, as it was when he said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," and they thought he meant to reprove them for having no bread.

Once, also, he drove men from the temple; but it was with "a scourge of small cords," and a gentle doom it was, compared to their deserts. He expressly said his servants would *not* fight, because his kingdom was not of this world. We find in his example no instances of true

severity. His whole life was benevolence personified. He was the PRINCE OF PEACE.

Do we forget that Christ is our example? Whatever is right for us to do, would, in general, have been right for him. Imagine the Redeemer robed in the trappings of a man of blood, leading on columns to slaughter, laying a country waste, setting fire to cities, storming fortresses, and consigning tens of thousands to wounds and anguish, death and damnation, just to define some point of policy, to decide some kingly quarrel, to enlarge some boundary, or avenge some insult. See him returning from such scenes, stained with gore, and weary with the work of death. Could "meekness and lowliness" be learned from him thus engaged?

There is no rank or position in an army compatible with the character of Christ. It is most certain that we gather no army lessons from him who "came to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to comfort all that mourn." It is most certain that no man, who makes fighting his *profession*, can find authority in the example of our Lord.

It is not necessary to enlarge on this point. It will be conceded. No warrior thinks of making Christ his pattern. How then can a follower of Christ overlook the inconsistency between the profession of religion, and the profession of arms?

3. *War is inconsistent not only with the general structure and nature of Christianity, and the example of Jesus; but it violates all the express precepts of the New Testament.*

Even the Old Testament does not sanction war, as a custom. In each case of lawful war, it was entered on by express command. If such authority were now given, we might worthily take up arms. But without it, how can we violate both the genius and precepts of our religion, and set at nought the example of a divine guide? It should be remembered, that in no case, even under the Old Testament, was war appointed to decide doubtful questions, or to settle quarrels, but to inflict national punishment. They were intended, as are pestilence and famine, to chastise nations guilty of provoking God. Such is never the pretext of modern war; and if it were, it would require divine authority, which, as has just been said, would induce even members of the Peace Society to fight.

As to the New Testament, a multitude of precepts might be quoted. "Ye have heard, an eye for an eye; but I say unto you, RESIST NOT EVIL.—Follow peace with all men.—Love one another.—Do justice, love mercy.—Love your enemies.—Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace.—Return good for evil.—Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one toward another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.—If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.—Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

It is unnecessary to adduce more of these passages. All know how much they abound in the New Testament. There they stand. No interpretation can nullify their force, or pervert their application. In any sense the words will bear, they forbid war. If language have any force, they equally forbid *retaliation*. Yet this is always advanced as the very best pretext for war, and is more frequently the avowed reason than any other!

The preceding quotations relate to the single point of fighting. But contending nations and armies violate *every* precept of the gospel. Rehearse all the catalogue of graces, and mark how we are enjoined to be meek, lowly, peaceable, easy to be entreated, gentle, thinking no evil, merciful, slow to anger, given to quietness, knowledge, patience, temperance, prayer. War sets them all at nought.

Of the sermon on the mount, five benedictions are upon the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, and the peace-makers. Two others are upon the persecuted and reviled. These include all but two of the entire list, and the others regard those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the pure in heart. The professed warrior, therefore, shuts himself out from all these benedictions! The discourse then declares, that not only killing, but anger, is murder. It expressly revokes the law of retaliation, and, exploding the traditionary rule of loving our neighbor, and hating our enemy, requires us to love our enemies, and do good to them which despitefully use us. Afterwards, in presenting a form of prayer, it not only teaches us to say, "Forgive us our trespasses, *as* we forgive those that trespass against us," but, "*If* ye forgive *not* men their

trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you." What a peace sermon is here! What modern peace society goes farther than this?

The *irresponsible* feelings of a regular soldier are necessarily wrong. He makes war a trade, and is ready to fight any nation, or any part of his own nation, as he is sent. He must have no mind of his own. He is to wheel, march, load, fire, advance or flee, just as he is bidden, and because he is bidden. In the language of Thomas Jefferson, "the breaking of men to military discipline, is breaking their spirits to passive obedience." * The nearer a soldier comes to a mere machine, the better soldier he makes. Is this right for a *Christian*? Is it compatible with his duty to "examine all things, and hold fast that which is good?"

The *contempt of life*, which is necessary to a brave soldier, is sin. Life is our probation,—our period of preliminary service to the great God. No man should despise it. He who masters the fear of death, must do it either by religious influence, or by rejecting the fear of God, and all concern for the future state of his soul. That there are religious soldiers, is true; but they are far too few to give character to an army. They are mere exceptions to the general military character. The contempt of life, which distinguishes the veteran, is itself a great sin, and is induced by the preceding great sin of casting off the fear of God, and the concern for the soul.

What gospel precept is there, which he who makes war a profession, is not at times compelled to violate? What Christian grace is there, which would not depreciate him for his trade of death?

Some graces, it is confessed, are convenient in camp; as when a soldier acts as a servant or a laborer. If he have charge of a horse, or a wardrobe, it is desired that he possess honesty, meekness, and faithfulness. But these qualities spoil him for the field. He must then cast away meekness, and fight. He must cast away honesty, and forage. He must cast away forgiveness, and revenge his country. He must not return good for evil, but blow for blow, wound for wound. Thus, when we take the common soldier individually, we find him compelled to violate every precept of his religion.

Turning from such details to a more comprehensive

* Letter to John Jay, May 23, 1788.

view of the subject, we come to the same result. The whole structure of an army is in violation of New Testament precepts. What absolute despotism! What division of rank by nice gradations! "Condescending to men of low estate" would spoil discipline. "Esteeming others better than ourselves" would degrade the officers. Instead of humility, must be gay trappings. Instead of Christ's law of love, must be man's rule of honor. Instead of examining all things, and holding fast that which is good, the regular soldier must be like a trained blood-hound, ready to be let loose against any foe. Instead of returning good for evil, the army is organized expressly to return injuries with interest.

Look at an army prepared for battle. See the cannons, muskets, mortars, swords, drums, trumpets and flags. Do these men look like Christians? Do they talk like followers of the meek and lowly Son of God? Are they prepared to act like the friends of the human race, and like followers of God, as dear children seeking to bring all men to the knowledge of him? Are the lessons they learn at daily drill like the acquirements needed for a life of faith? Are their feelings toward the opposite host like those which are produced by "fervent love" out of "a pure heart?"

Look at an army in the hour of battle. See attacks and retreats, battalions annihilated, commanders falling, shouts of onset, groans of death, horses trampling the fallen, limbs flying in the air, suffocating smoke, thundering artillery, thousands smarting in the agony of death, and none to administer a cup of water. Do the precepts of Christianity authorize such a scene? Would such an exhibition ever grow out of its legitimate effects?

Look at the field when all is over. The harvest trampled and destroyed, houses smoking in ruin, the mangled and slain strewed among dead horses, and broken gun-carriages! Prowlers stripping booty even from the warm bodies of the dying! Jackals lurking around, and birds of prey wheeling above! Here and there a wretched widow, or an anxious wife, seeking her loved one among the dead and dying! Does all this look as if Christians had there been serving their Master, the God of mercy?

Let us turn our eyes to the ocean. A huge ship, bristling with implements of death, glides quietly along. Presently "*a sail!*" is echoed from sentinel to sentinel. All on board catch the sound, and gaze at the faint

outline. At length, she is discerned to be a ship of war, and all strive to discern her flag. On that hangs the important issue! For no feud, no jealousy, no enmity exists between the crews. At last the signal is discerned to be that of a foe. Immediately what a scene! Decks cleared and sanded, ports opened, tompions out, guns arranged, matches lighted, and every preparation made for a work of death. While waiting the moment to engage, every word is indication of pride, or revenge, or daring, or wrath, or ambition.

The fight begins! Death flies with every shot. Blood and carnage cover the decks. The rigging is cut to pieces, and the hull is bored with hot shot. Officers are picked off by sharp-shooters, and scores of common men perish at their posts. At length, one party strikes, and the strife is stayed. Perhaps, ere all the wounded can be removed, the noble and costly ship sinks into the deep. The victorious, herself almost a wreck, commits her slain to the deep, and bears on towards her country the agonized, the crippled and dying of both ships. What a scene to gratify malignant demons!—What distracting tidings does she bear to the bereaved at home! What pain and misery does she carry within her! In all this, there was no personal malice, no private offence given; nothing was known of one another, except from the respective flags.

But no where does war wear such horrors as in a siege. The inhabitants are straitly shut up. Business, pleasure, education and intercourse are checked; and sorrow, poverty, terror and distress are spread abroad. The bombardment begins. Shells explode in the streets, or penetrate the roofs. Citizens are killed in the streets, and soldiers on the ramparts. Women and children retreat to cellars, and live in all discomfort. Day by day the gloom thickens. All news is of houses burnt, persons killed, prices raised, and scarcity increased. Gladly, perhaps, would the citizens surrender; but the governor is inflexible. At length, famine is threatened. The laborer, out of employment, cannot purchase at such prices, and his family, hitherto accustomed to daily comforts, fall victims to rigorous poverty. Still the siege continues. The middling classes next sink to beggary. Every thing is sold to buy a little food. Anon, breaches are made in the walls. All must work, amid galling fire, to repair them. Mines are sprung, blowing houses and the occupants into the air. No relief comes.—Dead animals, offal, skins, the very

bodies of the slain, are eaten. Hundreds perish in desperate sorties. All are miserable. The widow, the bereft mother, the disappointed bride, and the tender orphan, mourn continually. Pestilence succeeds to famine. Thousands, who have escaped violence, die of disease. At length, the city is taken by storm; pillage, and perhaps an awful conflagration, succeed; a brutal soldiery raven among the virtuous; and the indescribable scene ends in permanent poverty, lamentation, and dishonor. Is this Christianity?

We will close by a confirmatory picture, from the history of the peninsular wars of Napoleon. It is part of a description of the second siege of Zaragossa.

"The French fought their way into the entrance of this ill-fated city by mining and exploding one house after another, while the inhabitants were confined to that quarter of the city still in possession of the Spaniards, who were crowded, men, women and children, into the cellars, to avoid the cannon-balls and bombs. A pestilence broke out, almost as a matter of course; for 'war's last horrors are the ensanguined field.' When once it had begun, it was impossible to check its progress, or confine it to one quarter of the city. It was not long before more than thirty hospitals were established. As soon as one was destroyed by the bombardment, the patients were removed to some other building, which was in a state to afford them temporary shelter, and thus the infection was carried into every part of Zaragossa. The average of daily deaths from this cause was, at this time, not less than three hundred and fifty. Men stretched upon straw, in helpless misery, lay breathing their last, and with their dying breath spreading the mortal taint of their own disease, without medicines, food or attendance; for the ministers of charity themselves became the victims of the disease. The slightest wound produced gangrene and death in bodies so prepared for dissolution by distress of mind, agitation, and want of proper aliment and of sleep; for there was no respite, either by day or night, for this devoted city. Even the natural order of day and night was destroyed in Zaragossa. By day, it was involved in a red sulphuric atmosphere of smoke and dust, which hid the face of heaven; by night the fire of cannon and mortars, and the flames of burning houses, kept it in a state of horrible illumination. The cemeteries could no longer afford room for the dead. Large pits were dug to receive

them in the streets, and in the courts of the public buildings, till hands were wanted for the labor; they were laid before the churches, heaped upon one another, and covered with sheets; and, that no spectacle of horror might be wanting, it happened not unfrequently, that these piles of mortality were struck by a shell, and the shattered bodies scattered in all directions. When the French entered the city, *six thousand bodies* were lying in the streets and trenches, or piled up in heaps before the churches."

PRACTICAL WORKINGS OF THE WAR-SYSTEM.

RIGHTS OF BLOCKADE.—A nation in war claims the right of blockading the ports of its enemy to the exclusion, without indemnification, of all other nations from any intercourse whatever with them. A single individual in the great community of nations, thus asserts the right to control and to injure the rest for its own selfish or vindictive purposes; and all this it does without consent, consultation, or the least thought of reparation.

We will not now inquire into the correctness of this theory, nor ask whether the civilized world, if duly enlightened, would submit to such an outrage upon their rights; we merely invite attention to the wide extent and vast amount of mischief occasioned by the actual application of this war-principle.

French Blockade of Mexico.—In 1839, France, in asserting her claim to an indemnity of about \$600,000, blockaded the principal port of Mexico, and thus injured the merchants of England alone to such an extent, that the Duke of Wellington advised them to pay the whole demand from their own pockets. This advice went, of course, upon the assumption, that the blockade, if continued, would injure them to a still greater amount; and, if so, how incalculable must have been the injury to the whole circle of nations interested in the Mexican trade! Yet the savage laws of war allowed France, for the sake of \$600,000, claimed with scarce a shadow of right, to inflict upon other nations a loss of millions on millions.

Blockade of Chinese Ports.—England, in the prosecution of her infamous war against China, claims the right, by blockading her ports, to exclude the whole world from her trade. How much this exclusion will cost them all, we can neither estimate nor safely conjecture; but *some*